

BENTON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION SAFETY ACTION PLAN (TSAP)

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN



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Prepared for:

Benton County

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in coordination with DKS Associates

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INTRODUCTION

Benton County, located in the Willamette Valley, is home to a diverse range of transportation users including daily commuters, high volumes of bicyclists, and state highway travelers. Benton County's Transportation Safety Action Plan (TSAP) seeks to create a safer transportation network for all road users by aligning with federal Safe Streets for All (SS4A) guidelines and adopting the Safe Systems Approach. This plan prioritizes reducing fatalities and serious injuries through evidence-based strategies and community-driven insights to ensure the safety of all who live, work, and travel in Benton County.

The TSAP will support the County's long-term goal of eliminating transportation-related fatalities and severe injuries on its roads. In close collaboration with community members, Benton County aims to create a robust action plan that supports local and state-level safety objectives while prioritizing accessibility, transparency, and equity.

This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) will guide public involvement for the project team to develop Benton County's TSAP. The PIP reflects commitments from DKS Associates (DKS) and JLA Public Involvement (JLA) to carry out public involvement activities designed to keep interested parties and the public engaged and informed about the project and its goals. This project presents an opportunity to address the needs and values of a broad and diverse range of the region's transportation system users. Project outreach results will inform the focus areas for the TSAP and other local transportation safety improvements.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE TRANSPORTATION SAFETY ACTION PLAN

The Benton County TSAP is a two-year initiative that will address current and emerging transportation safety challenges, enhance the safety of the County's roadway system, and support the County's vision of creating a safe environment for all transportation users. The plan will:

- Evaluate crash data using a data driven approach,
- Understand the multi-modal safety issues in the area,
- Develop safety policies and recommended actions to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes for all modes of travel, and
- Establish safety performance measures to help monitor implementation of countermeasures

The project will:

- **Apply the Safe Systems Approach** to holistically address transportation safety, anticipating and mitigating human error to protect vulnerable road users, especially bicyclists, pedestrians, and rural commuters.
- **Analyze Safety Data** to identify high-injury areas and contributing factors to crashes, using crash data, demographic analysis, and roadway characteristics to inform strategic recommendations.
- **Engage Community and Interagency Partners** by inviting local agencies, transportation advocates, and the public to participate in the planning process. This includes city-level coordination to align safety objectives with the City of Corvallis' Transportation Safety Action Plan.

All roads within the Benton County boundaries regardless of jurisdiction or classification will be evaluated. A final TSAP will be available spring 2026.

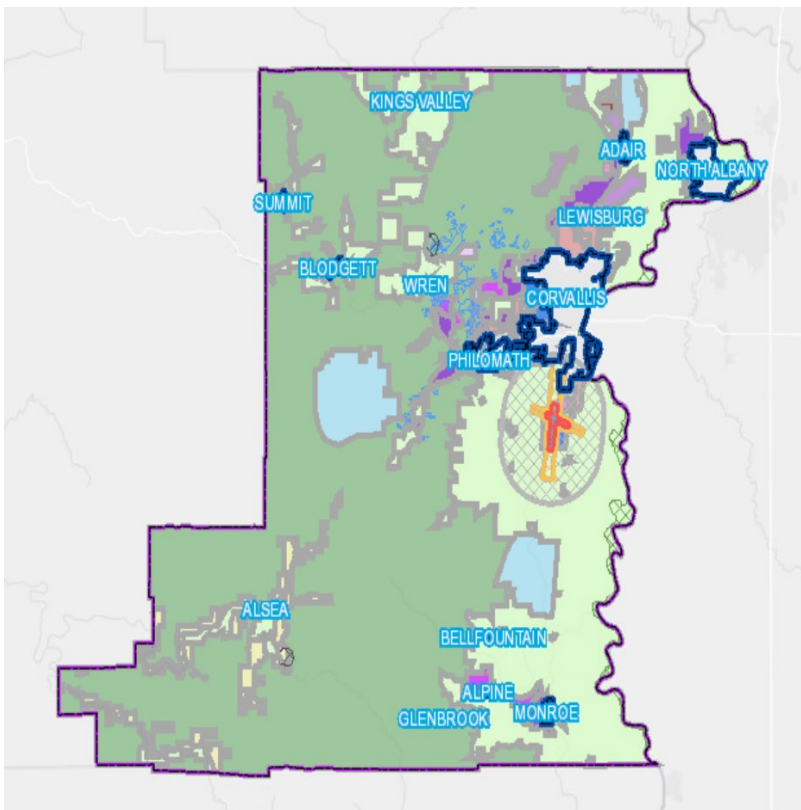
PROJECT OBJECTIVES / OUTREACH GOALS

The community engagement objectives for this project are to:

- Offer diverse opportunities for engagement through tools like an interactive website, in-person events, and social media.
- Meet community members where they are to make participation more convenient and accessible.
- Strive to gather substantial and meaningful input from a wide range of community members.
- Ensure decision-makers are confident in the thoroughness and equity of the public involvement efforts.
- Focus on obtaining valuable feedback from the traveling public in multimodal corridors to inform decision-making.
- Deliver clear, safety-focused messaging while managing expectations about outcomes and scope.

PROJECT AREA

This project area encompasses Benton County including all cities and unincorporated communities within their boundaries, including:



- Alpine
- Alsea
- Adair Village
- Bellfountain
- Blodgett
- Corvallis*
- Glenbrook
- Kings Valley
- Lewisburg
- Monroe
- North Albany
- Philomath
- Summit
- Wren

Picture from Benton County Zoning Map GIS Tool

**Note: the City of Corvallis is undertaking their own TSAP process with a focus on roads within city limits. TSAP development will be coordinated between County and City efforts.*

ANTICIPATED PROJECT TIMELINE AND DELIVERABLES

The project, beginning in October 2024, is expected to conclude by March 2026. Key deliverables include:

1. Development of a comprehensive TSAP document with prioritized safety projects.
2. A list of the top ten critical locations and up to three systemic crash patterns for safety improvements based on crash data and identified systemic risks.
3. Outreach strategies and performance metrics to track and report on progress toward safety goals.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Public engagement is a central element of the Benton County TSAP, recognizing that community input is crucial to developing a plan that accurately reflects local needs and perspectives. Benton County will partner with the consultant teams from DKS and JLA to implement a series of public involvement activities to solicit input from residents, community partners and other interested parties.

The public engagement process is designed to be inclusive and accessible, with multiple touchpoints to engage a diverse cross-section of the community. Engagement efforts will prioritize:

- **Transparency** by providing frequent updates and clear project information.
- **Inclusion** by ensuring access to engagement opportunities for all communities, including non-English-speaking residents and rural populations.
- **Varied Engagement Channels** include both digital and in-person events to ensure broad participation.

The County will also consider environmental justice issues and strive to incorporate voices from communities disproportionately affected by transportation safety challenges.

PLANNED PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

- **Community Open Houses:** In-person sessions at accessible community locations across the county.
- **Online Surveys and Mapping Tools:** Interactive digital tools to gather feedback from residents on safety concerns and potential improvements.
- **Advisory Committees:** Formation of a Task Force and Stakeholder Advisory Committee with representatives from local agencies, advocacy groups, and community leaders.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PURPOSE AND GOALS

The purpose of public involvement in Benton County's TSAP is to ensure that the community's safety concerns, needs, and priorities are integrated into the final plan. Community input is essential to create a responsive and impactful TSAP.

Public Involvement and Communication Goals

- **Consult and Collaborate** with community members and subject matter experts to capture a comprehensive understanding of regional transportation safety concerns.
- **Identify Safety Priorities** by gathering insights on public perceptions of safety, priority areas, and effective existing measures.

- **Ensure Equity and Inclusion** by actively engaging groups such as the Latinx community, low-income populations, seniors, and individuals living with disabilities to understand their unique safety needs and perspectives.
- **Educate and Inform** the public about the TSAP's objectives, current safety data, and ongoing safety initiatives in Benton County, fostering an informed and supportive community.

Through these efforts, Benton County aims to create a TSAP that is data-driven, community-focused, and aligned with the community's vision for a safe, accessible, and equitable transportation system.

KEY MESSAGES

Throughout the project, the project team will use these key messages in public communications. These messages will be updated as needed to reflect the project's progress.

About the project

- Benton County is creating a Transportation Safety Action Plan (TSAP) to improve road safety for everyone in the County. Our goal is to make our roads safer by addressing traffic risks, especially for people walking, rolling, biking and driving.
- The TSAP will use data to pinpoint where crashes happen and understand what causes them. Then, we'll work with the community to design safety solutions that meet local needs.
- By aligning with the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) program and regional safety goals, this plan unlocks opportunities for Benton County to secure funding to implement key safety projects.
- This plan is all about reducing crashes that lead to serious injuries or deaths. We're focusing on rural roads and busy areas where accidents happen most often, while working to make all parts of Benton County safer for everyone.

The plan will focus on

- Reducing serious crashes and injuries on County roads, prioritizing areas where crash rates are high.
- Recommending specific safety improvements for rural and high-traffic corridors, especially those lacking shoulders or bike lanes.
- Establishing long-term goals to make Benton County roads safer and tracking our progress along the way.

What we need from you

- **We want to hear from you!** Share with us the places where you feel unsafe when traveling around Benton County, whether you're driving, walking, biking, or rolling. Your input will help us identify areas that might need immediate attention.
- **Tell us what's working and what needs improvement.** We want to know where you think changes are most urgently needed and what you think makes Benton County roads safe.
- **We're committed to hearing from everyone** and are especially interested in engaging with rural residents, communities of color, those with lower incomes, and community members whose primary language is not English.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND INTERESTED PARTIES

Alongside providing opportunities for the broader public to participate, Benton County's TSAP public involvement process will include key organizations and agencies directly involved in or affected by transportation safety issues in the County. The aim is to inform, consult, and collaborate with partners to develop a comprehensive and community-responsive transportation safety action plan.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Safety is a shared priority across many local agencies, organizations, and interest groups. The Project Management Team (PMT) will engage Benton County community partners at key stages of the TSAP development process to ensure it reflects the needs and values of the County's diverse communities. Key partners include, but are not limited to:

- Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO)
- City of Adair Village
- City of Corvallis
- City of Philomath
- City of Monroe
- Benton County Sheriff's Office
- Benton County Health Department
- Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)
- Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)
- Rural Fire Districts
- Corvallis School District

DECISION-MAKING BODIES AND COMMITTEES

The involvement of key decision-making bodies and committees is essential for the TSAP to be well-coordinated, widely supported, and effectively implemented. The PMT will provide updates to and consult with these bodies to ensure that the plan's goals and strategies align with broader countywide and regional objectives.

Benton County Board of Commissioners – The Board will review and approve the TSAP, ensuring it aligns with countywide safety, accessibility, and equity goals. Once approved, the TSAP will guide Benton County's future transportation planning efforts and safety investment priorities.

TSAP Task Force – Composed of representatives including local residents and industry representatives, the Task Force will offer specific expertise and local perspectives to enhance the TSAP's responsiveness to community needs. The Task Force will also review the final TSAP document and make recommendations for adoption to the Benton County Board of Commissioners.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee – In addition to the Task Force, Benton County will involve community partners. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee will guide TSAP development by providing insights from their respective organizations and reviewing key elements at different project stages.

This collaborative structure is designed to integrate the perspectives of both decision-makers and community members throughout the TSAP process.

PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS

Public engagement will target the following key interest groups in order to gather information about the community's needs and priorities:

- Local traffic safety committees and advocates
- Major mode advocacy groups – trucking, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, auto
- Public health authorities
- Community organizations that represent underserved populations
- Accessibility advocates
- Local business and economic interests
- Housing and community development interests
- ODEC (Oregon Driver Education Center) type organizations
- Oregon State University?

Community organizations that work with, serve, or represent the above interests within Benton County include (but are not limited to):

- Albany Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission
- Benton Community Foundation
- Benton County Health Department

- Benton Habitat for Humanity
- Blindskills, Inc.
- Casa Latinos Unidos
- Centro Cultural de Corvallis
- Community Services Consortium
- Corvallis Bicycle Collective
- Corvallis Sustainability Coalition
- Linn-Benton Hispanic Advisory Committee
- Old Mill Center for Children and Families
- OSU Extension Service - Benton County
- Strengthening Rural Families

These organizations may be invited to participate in community meetings, contribute to advisory committees, participate in stakeholder interviews or provide feedback during public engagement sessions as part of the TSAP’s development.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS

The initial list of organizations and interested parties for the Benton County TSAP was developed to align with the goal of consulting and engaging community members who reflect the County’s diversity. This includes the Latinx community, low-income residents, youth, people living with disabilities, and older adults. The list was informed by demographic data for Benton County, which shows:

- **Primary Languages:** The most common language spoken after English is Spanish, highlighting the need for bilingual outreach materials. Approximately 19% speak a language other than English at home.
- **Households with Disabilities:** Approximately 23.5% of households in Benton County include one or more people living with a disability, indicating a substantial portion of the community with accessibility needs.
- **Age Distribution:** Age distribution of the community is 15.3% under 18, 66.5% between 18-65, and 18.2% aged 65 and older.

This demographic information helps ensure the TSAP is responsive to the needs of all residents by emphasizing inclusive and equitable outreach efforts across age, language, ability, and cultural demographics.

Note: The above considerations were informed by data shown in Appendix A, collected from the U.S Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) (2018-2022), and Esri-Data Axle (2024).

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES AND SCHEDULE

Tool/Activity	Description	Responsible Party (Lead)	Anticipated Schedule
Public Involvement Plan	<p>The PIP outlines public involvement and communications goals, activities and key messages for the project. The PIP will also include a demographic analysis of the project area to reach key communities and equity considerations, including ways to engage underserved communities.</p> <p>A detailed communications and outreach schedule with level of engagement and responsible parties identified for all outreach and communications tasks. And</p>	<p>JLA – to write draft and provide revisions.</p> <p>DKS – to provide demographic report of Benton County and review.</p> <p>County – to review and provide feedback.</p>	<p>First Draft: November 2024</p> <p>(ongoing updates)</p>

	opportunities to collaborate with the Corvallis TSAP on engagement.		
Communications:	JLA will develop content for the project website and update as needed	All communications will be led by the County.	Ongoing
Project Website			
Project Information Materials	<p>Up to four (4) bilingual information materials and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factsheet • Flier or poster • Presentation/ PowerPoint • Spanish language-only promotional material 	<p>JLA – to write draft and provide revisions.</p> <p>DKS – to review and provide feedback.</p> <p>County – to review and provide feedback. If mailers are needed, County will lead.</p>	<p><i>Due three months from NTP</i></p> <p>Week of November 25th</p>
Social Media	JLA will develop key messages	<p>JLA – to develop content.</p> <p>County – to post to social media channels.</p>	Ongoing
Stakeholder Community Interviews	<p>Up to ten (10) community member interviews will be conducted either virtually or in-person.</p> <p>JLA will facilitate and summarize feedback for up to ten (10) 1-hour virtual interviews w/ key members (including freight operators/bicycle safety advocates). These interviews will engage farmers, the farm bureau, and the disability community if not represented in the Task Force or Stakeholder Advisory Committee.</p>	<p>County – to identify and invite participants to participate.</p> <p>JLA – to schedule, create meeting agenda and summaries, and facilitate conversation.</p>	<i>Summary due four months from NTP</i>
In-Person Open Houses	Six (6) total bilingual Open House meetings (up to three (3) per milestone).	<p>County – to promote the events.</p> <p>DKS – to support with materials and attend events.</p> <p>JLA – to develop materials, events logistics, and open house summaries</p>	<p>Open House #1: TBD</p> <p>Open House #2: TBD</p> <p>Open House #3: TBD</p> <p>Open House #4: TBD</p> <p>Open House #5: TBD</p> <p>Open House #6: TBD</p>
Online Open Houses	Two (2) virtual open houses will be held in addition to the in-person open houses to share content and gather community	County – to promote the events	<p>Online Open House #1: TBD</p> <p>Online Open House #2: TBD</p>

	feedback. The Online Open House will remain open for two weeks. JLA will analyze and summarize responses and provide a complete data file of responses (as an appendix to the summaries).	JLA – to develop content and online open houses summary.	
Task Force Meetings	Five (5) Task Force Meetings will be held with selected community members to engage in in-depth discussion to help develop the Benton County TSAP.	County – to initiate formation and ongoing communication. DKS – to create agendas and summaries and facilitate.	Meeting #1: TBD Meeting #2: TBD Meeting #3: TBD Meeting #4: TBD Meeting #5: TBD
Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meetings	Two (2) Advisory Committee meetings will be held with selected agency staff and subject matter experts to engage in in-depth discussions to help develop the Benton County TSAP.	County – to initiate formation and communication. DKS– to create agendas and meeting materials, and summary JLA – to attend and support facilitation.	Meeting #1: TBD Meeting #2: TBD

ADDITIONAL OUTREACH CONSIDERATIONS

COORDINATION WITH CITY OF CORVALLIS TSAP

Benton County and the City of Corvallis are working together on their respective TSAPs to maximize efficiency and consistency. The Corvallis TSAP will focus on the city limits, while the Benton County TSAP will cover surrounding urban fringe areas and County-maintained streets within the city. JLA will work with DKS, County, and City staff to ensure coordination efforts involve:

- Joint participation in project management and committees
- Aligned project schedules
- Consistent data sharing to avoid duplication

Public involvement plans and engagement opportunities will also be coordinated with clear messaging explaining the relationship between the two TSAPs and joint outreach events with both jurisdictions committed to inclusive processes that consider equity and collaboration.

JLA will participate in bi-weekly meetings with the Project Management Team (PMT) comprised of Consultant and County Project Managers and other lead team members to discuss recent activities and upcoming actions. This project will use Basecamp, an online project management website to document team communications and share deliverables that both agencies will support.

APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA REVIEW

As part of the outreach to engage citizens and stakeholders in the development of the Benton County TSAP, the project team will make special efforts to involve historically underrepresented groups as well as the priority populations recognized by the 1994 Executive Order (E.O.) 12898.

The following demographic information was sourced from the U.S Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) (2018-2022), and Esri-Data Axle (2024).

HOW THIS INFORMATION INFORMS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Demographic information can inform the best ways to engage the various community groups that live within a project area, including language translation and interpretation needs, public engagement activities that match the community’s age and/or backgrounds and providing appropriate accommodations for disabilities. The following demographic data for the Benton County, Oregon area includes information for the project area to reflect the needs of key stakeholders who will be impacted by the project.

Table 1. Total Population

Estimate (Total population)	
Benton County	98,368

Table 2. Age

Benton County		
	Esri Estimate	Percentage
Total population	99,441*	100%
Under 18 years	15,216	15.3%
18 to 65 years	66,136	66.5%
65 years and over	18,089	18.2%

**Esri report has a discrepancy in total populations broken down by age.*

Table 3. Disability Characteristics

Benton County		
	Esri Estimate	Percentage
Total	38,904	100%
Households with 1+ persons living with disability	9,145	23.5%
Households with no persons living with disability	29,759	76.5%

Table 4. Languages Spoken (ACS)

Benton County				
Total	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	9,455	55,155	15,394	80,004
Spanish	786	3,302	295	4,383
Spanish & English Well	720	2,850	179	3,749
Spanish & English Not Well	66	354	103	523
Spanish & No English	0	98	13	111
Indo-European	359	1,820	238	2,417

Indo-European & English Well	357	1,812	128	2,297
Indo-European & English Not Well	2	8	110	120
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	569	3,673	228	4,470
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Well	495	3,243	125	3,863
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	61	424	63	548
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	13	6	40	59
Other Language	72	736	0	808
Other Language & English Well	72	585	0	657
Other Language & English Not Well	0	82	0	82
Other Language & No English	0	69	0	69

Table 5. Overview of Housing, Income, and Poverty Status

Benton County	
	Esri Estimate
Median household income	\$72,799
Total households	38,904
Income in the past 12 months below poverty level	7,060 (19%)
Income in the past 12 months at or above poverty level	31,844 (81%)
Households without vehicles	2,923 (7.5%)

Table 6. Population and Businesses

Benton County	
	Esri Estimate
Daytime Population	101,559
Total Businesses	3,353
Total Employees	37,336